



# **Artificial Software Diversification for WebAssembly**

JAVIER CABRERA-ARTEAGA

Doctoral Thesis  
Supervised by  
Benoit Baudry and Martin Monperrus  
Stockholm, Sweden, 2023

KTH Royal Institute of Technology  
School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science  
Division of Software and Computer Systems  
SE-10044 Stockholm  
Sweden

TRITA-EECS-AVL-2020:4  
ISBN 100-

Akademisk avhandling som med tillstånd av Kungl Tekniska högskolan framlägges  
till offentlig granskning för avläggande av Teknologie doktorexamen i elektroteknik  
i .

© Javier Cabrera-Arteaga , date

Tryck: Universitetsservice US AB

## Abstract

[1]

**Keywords:** Lorem, Ipsum, Dolor, Sit, Amet

## **Sammanfattning**

[1]

## LIST OF PAPERS

1. ***Superoptimization of WebAssembly Bytecode***  
**Javier Cabrera-Arteaga**, Shrinish Donde, Jian Gu, Orestis Floros, Lucas Satabin, Benoit Baudry, Martin Monperrus  
*Conference Companion of the 4th International Conference on Art, Science, and Engineering of Programming (Programming 2021), MoreVMs*  
<https://doi.org/10.1145/3397537.3397567>
2. ***CROW: Code Diversification for WebAssembly***  
**Javier Cabrera-Arteaga**, Orestis Floros, Oscar Vera-Pérez, Benoit Baudry, Martin Monperrus  
*Network and Distributed System Security Symposium (NDSS 2021), MADWeb*  
<https://doi.org/10.14722/madweb.2021.23004>
3. ***Multi-Variant Execution at the Edge***  
**Javier Cabrera-Arteaga**, Pierre Laperdrix, Martin Monperrus, Benoit Baudry  
*Conference on Computer and Communications Security (CCS 2022), Moving Target Defense (MTD)*  
<https://dl.acm.org/doi/abs/10.1145/3560828.3564007>
4. ***WebAssembly Diversification for Malware Evasion***  
**Javier Cabrera-Arteaga**, Tim Toady, Martin Monperrus, Benoit Baudry  
*Computers & Security, Volume 131, 2023*  
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0167404823002067>
5. ***Wasm-mutate: Fast and Effective Binary Diversification for WebAssembly***  
**Javier Cabrera-Arteaga**, Nick Fitzgerald, Martin Monperrus, Benoit Baudry
6. ***Scalable Comparison of JavaScript V8 Bytecode Traces***  
**Javier Cabrera-Arteaga**, Martin Monperrus, Benoit Baudry  
*11th ACM SIGPLAN International Workshop on Virtual Machines and Intermediate Languages (SPLASH 2019)*  
<https://doi.org/10.1145/3358504.3361228>

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

[1]

# ACRONYMS

List of commonly used acronyms:

**AE** Acronym examples





# Contents

<b>List of Papers</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Acknowledgement</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Acronyms</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>Contents</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1 Background . . . . .	2
1.2 Problem statement . . . . .	2
1.3 Automatic Software diversification requirements . . . . .	2
1.4 List of contributions . . . . .	2
1.5 Summary of research papers . . . . .	3
1.6 Thesis outline . . . . .	3
<b>2 Background and state of the art</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 WebAssembly . . . . .	4
2.2 Software diversification . . . . .	4
2.3 Generating Software Diversification . . . . .	4
2.4 Exploiting Software Diversification . . . . .	4
2.5 Defensive Diversification . . . . .	4
2.6 Offensive Diversification. . . . .	4
2.7 Contributions of this thesis to Software Diversification for WebAssembly . . . . .	4

<b>3</b>	<b>Technical Contributions</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1	Approach landscape . . . . .	5
3.2	Compiler based approach . . . . .	5
3.3	Binary based approach . . . . .	5
3.4	Approaches comparison . . . . .	5
3.5	Accompanying artifacts . . . . .	5
<b>4</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>6</b>
4.1	Research questions. . . . .	6
4.2	Experimental protocols . . . . .	6
4.3	Results . . . . .	6
<b>5</b>	<b>Results and discussion</b>	<b>7</b>
5.1	Summary of technical contributions . . . . .	7
5.2	Summary of empirical findings . . . . .	7
5.3	Summary of empirical findings . . . . .	7
5.4	Future Work . . . . .	7
<b>I</b>	<b>Included papers</b>	<b>8</b>
	Superoptimization of WebAssembly Bytecode	<b>10</b>
	CROW: Code Diversification for WebAssembly	<b>11</b>
	Multi-Variant Execution at the Edge	<b>12</b>
	WebAssembly Diversification for Malware Evasion	<b>13</b>
	Wasm-mutate: Fast and Effective Binary Diversification for WebAssembly	<b>14</b>
	Scalable Comparison of JavaScript V8 Bytecode Traces	<b>15</b>

## ■ 1.1 Background

**TODO** Motivate with the open challenges.

## ■ 1.2 Problem statement

**TODO** Problem statement **TODO** Set the requirements as R1, R2, then map each contribution to them.

## ■ 1.3 Automatic Software diversification requirements

1. 1: **TODO** Requirement 1

## ■ 1.4 List of contributions

**C1:** Methodology contribution: We propose a methodology for generating software diversification for WebAssembly and the assessment of the generated diversity.

**C2:** Theoretical contribution: We propose theoretical foundation in order to improve Software Diversification for WebAssembly.

**C3:** Automatic diversity generation for WebAssembly: We generate WebAssembly program variants.

**C4:** Software Diversity for Defensive Purposes: We assess how generated WebAssembly program variants could be used for defensive purposes.

**C5:** Software Diversity for Offensive Purposes: We assess how generated WebAssembly program variants could be used for offensive purposes, yet improving security systems.

**C6:** Software Artifacts: We provide software artifacts for the research community to reproduce our results.

**TODO** Make multi column table

Contribution	Resarch papers				
	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5
C1	x	x		x	x
C2	x	x			
C3	x	x	x		
C4	x	x	x		
C5			x		
C6	x	x	x	x	x

Table 1.1: Mapping of the contributions to the research papers appended to this thesis.

## ■ 1.5 Summary of research papers

**Paper 1:** Superoptimization of WebAssembly Bytecode.

**Paper 2:** CROW: Code randomization for WebAssembly bytecode.

**Paper 3:** Multivariant execution at the Edge.

**Paper 4:** Wasm-mutate: Fast and efficient software diversification for WebAssembly.

**Paper 5:** WebAssembly Diversification for Malware evasion.

## ■ 1.6 Thesis outline

- 2.1 WebAssembly
- 2.2 Software diversification
- 2.3 Generating Software Diversification
  - Variants generation
  - Variants equivalence
- 2.4 Exploiting Software Diversification
- 2.5 Defensive Diversification
- 2.6 Offensive Diversification
- 2.7 Contributions of this thesis to Software Diversification for WebAssembly

- 3.1 Approach landscape
- 3.2 Compiler based approach
  - CROW
  - MEWE
- 3.3 Binary based approach
  - wasm-mutate
- 3.4 Approaches comparison
- 3.5 Accompanying artifacts

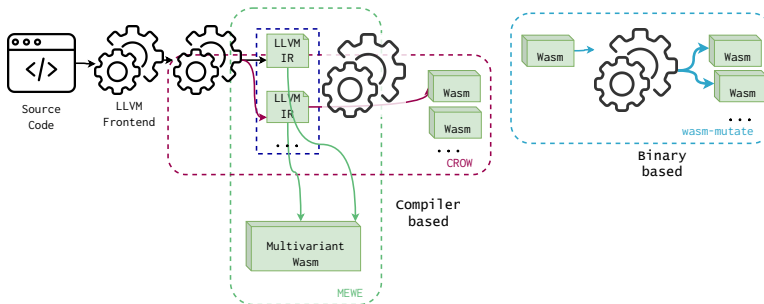


Figure 3.1: Approach landscape.

### ■ 4.1 Research questions

RQ1: To what extent can we artificially generate program variants for WebAssembly?

RQ2: To what extent are the generated variants dynamically different?

RQ3: To what extent do the artificial variants exhibit different execution times on edge-cloud platforms?

RQ4: Defensive Diversification: ?

RQ5: Offensive Diversification: ?

### ■ 4.2 Experimental protocols

#### ■ Metrics

New static metric. Diversification preservation.

### ■ 4.3 Results

- 5.1 Summary of technical contributions
- 5.2 Summary of empirical findings
- 5.3 Summary of empirical findings
- 5.4 Future Work



## REFERENCES

**Part I**

**Included papers**



# SUPEROPTIMIZATION OF WEBASSEMBLY BYTECODE

---

**Javier Cabrera-Arteaga**, Shrinish Donde, Jian Gu, Orestis Floros, Lucas Satabin, Benoit Baudry, Martin Monperrus

*Conference Companion of the 4th International Conference on Art, Science, and Engineering of Programming (Programming 2021), MoreVMs*

<https://doi.org/10.1145/3397537.3397567>

# CROW: CODE DIVERSIFICATION FOR WEBASSEMBLY

---

**Javier Cabrera-Arteaga**, Orestis Floros, Oscar Vera-Pérez, Benoit Baudry,  
Martin Monperrus

*Network and Distributed System Security Symposium (NDSS 2021), MADWeb*

<https://doi.org/10.14722/madweb.2021.23004>

# MULTI-VARIANT EXECUTION AT THE EDGE

---

**Javier Cabrera-Arteaga**, Pierre Laperdrix, Martin Monperrus, Benoit Baudry  
*Conference on Computer and Communications Security (CCS 2022), Moving  
Target Defense (MTD)*

<https://dl.acm.org/doi/abs/10.1145/3560828.3564007>

# WEBASSEMBLY      DIVERSIFICATION FOR MALWARE EVASION

---

**Javier Cabrera-Arteaga**, Tim Toady, Martin Monperrus, Benoit Baudry  
*Computers & Security, Volume 131, 2023*

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0167404823002067>

# WASM-MUTATE: FAST AND EFFECTIVE BINARY DIVERSIFICATION FOR WEBASSEMBLY

---

**Javier Cabrera-Arteaga**, Nick Fitzgerald, Martin Monperrus, Benoit Baudry  
*Under revision*



# SCALABLE COMPARISON OF JAVASCRIPT V8 BYTECODE TRACES

---

**Javier Cabrera-Arteaga**, Martin Monperrus, Benoit Baudry  
*11th ACM SIGPLAN International Workshop on Virtual Machines and  
Intermediate Languages (SPLASH 2019)*

<https://doi.org/10.1145/3358504.3361228>